(b) No specific demand in this regard has been received from any of the farmers groups.

(c) The Tobacco Board provides assistance to tobacco farmers through various Extension & Developmental schemes for improving the quality and production of tobacco in tune with the changing international demand and quality. The Board extends subsidy from 25% to 50% to the growers under various schemes such as Farm Mechanization, Integrated Pest Management, Energy conversation measures like fixing venturi furnaces to Barns and Roof Insulation to the Barns etc. The Board also helps farmers in construction of mini check dams/farm ponds for irrigation of tobacco crops and arranges input loans & crop loans. The entire crop of Virginia tobacco produced by tobacco farmers each year is marketed at a fairly remunerative price.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Coffee cultivation in Karnataka

3331. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Coffee Board has taken any steps to encourage coffee growers in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the steps taken last year to expand the cultivation of coffee in that area;

(c) what steps have been taken to expand the cultivation in other areas; and

(d) the details of the surveys of coffee cultivation potential conducted in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Coffee Board in collaboration with the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) of the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been involved in a coffee expansion programme in Visakhapatnam District

during the X Plan period. The Coffee Board made arrangements for supply of recommended varieties of coffee seeds and provided technical support and training to the growers.

(c) Expansion of coffee cultivation in areas other than Visakhapatnam District has not been taken up.

(d) The potential area for coffee cultivation in the Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh is estimated to be around 1.40 lakh ha.

Trade deficit among BRIC countries

3332. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only India has trade deficit among Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to overcome such deficit with a specific time-frame?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) According to WTO data for 2005, among the group of four countries, viz. Brazil, India, China and Russia, India is the only country which has trade deficit. The details in this regard are as follows:

(Value in US $ Billion)

Country	Export	Import	Trade Balance
Brazil	118.3	77.6	40.7
India	89.8	131.6	-41.8
China	762	660.1	101.9
Russian Federation	245.3	125.1	120.2

Source: WTO

(c) The increase in deficit is mainly on account of spurt in international price of crude oil and higher demand for capital goods, raw materials and intermediate goods required by the rapidly expanding manufacturing sector. In view of this, no action has been initiated by the Government to curb imports or to artificially balance trade.